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ABSTRACT

The community school is no longer a haven of security; violence has become a serious threat to education. The first steps in school crime prevention management are to acknowledge the problem's existence and to report a crime when it occurs. This document, written by a criminologist, contains five sections that address personal crisis management and employee safety when confronted with school crime and violence. Specifically, the sections discuss school security, robbery survival, rape survival, hostage-taking survival, and crime deterrence and prevention. Many measures, both administratively and individually, can be taken to make schools safer for learning and to prevent, deter, or reduce school violence. Included among these measures are: (1) instruction for teachers in dangerous settings on target-hardening methods not only for their own safety, but for the youths who need to be stopped and confronted with their criminality; (2) the designation of safe working locations for teachers within the school building; and (3) the understanding among all staff members that personal security is one's own responsibility and cannot be delegated to others. Crime avoidance techniques are literally a lifestyle commitment; they are easily adapted to one's daily routine. (101 references) (KM)

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School Violence: A Survival Guide for School Staff

with emphasis on robbery, rape, and hostage taking

by Chester L. Quarles

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1. INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM

Patrick Purdy strolled onto the grounds of Cleveland School in Stockton, California and shot five children to death. Before committing suicide, he wounded 30 more. In other actions in 1988, criminals and individuals with pronounced forms of mental illness seized some 18 schoolrooms, taking teachers and children hostage. In hundreds of documented incidents parents, students, criminals, and other intruders assaulted teachers and children (1).* Intruders and students kidnapped, raped, and murdered as well (2).

The community school is no longer a haven of security. Violence is a serious threat to education (3). Some schools may have high crime rates because they are located in areas with high crime rates (4), but the risks of violence for young adolescents in cities are greater at school than elsewhere (5). Furthermore, young people often become hardened offenders at an early age. Current crime statistics show that more than 50 percent of all those arrested today for criminal acts are juveniles (6).

> Walter Williams reported on the activities of Eastside High School Principal Joseph Clark in Paterson, New Jersey. Now known as "Crazy Joe" in some quarters, he initially found teacher assaults, students carrying guns and knives, drugs being sold on campus and sexual intercourse in the school's corridors and bathrooms. (7)

Increasingly, teachers are afraid to go to work. For example, the Oklahoma City Federation of Teachers discovered that 66 percent of that city's middle-school teachers and 52 percent of all city teachers had considered quitting because of the verbal and physical abuse they receive from students (8).

> Teachers and students have little control over the out-of-school factors that contribute to anti-social conduct, but the disproportionate amount of victimization that occurs within schools suggests that there are aspects of the school environment which either encourage or fail to discourage such behavior. (9)

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*Numbers in parentheses appearing in the text refer to the References beginning on page 45.

On average, a minimum of 157,000 crimes occur in U.S. schools in a typical month (10). Out of necessity, then, security precautions are being implemented. These security programs are a real burden to taxpayers, especially at a time of budgetary crisis. These programs have already made heavy inroads into academic and teaching budgets. For many years, the Los Angeles school system has employed a school security force and used alarms and other electronic security equipment to enhance school safety. In 1980, for example, an extra $1 million was voted for additional security guards—at a time when other district programs were being cut because of budgetary restraints (11).

Many different types of crime intrude upon the quality of school life. The National Institute of Education reports that each month there are—

- 2,400 acts of arson
- 13,000 thefts of school property
- 24,000 incidents of vandalism, and
- 42,000 cases of other damage to school property (12).

The National PTA has observed that the annual cost of school vandalism —probably in excess of $600 million a year—exceeds the nation's total annual spending for textbooks. And this figure does not include the escalating costs of school security (13).

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN LARGE CITIES

Equal opportunity does not exist in U.S. secondary schools. Minority students are especially likely to be attacked while at school. In fact, attacks against minority students are at least twice the number of those experienced by white students.

> Moreover, minority students are more likely to attend a school in which discipline has broken down and learning is disrupted. Students in predominantly minority secondary schools are twice as likely to be the victims of serious crimes as students in predominantly white schools. Teachers in these schools are five times more likely to be victims of attacks requiring medical treatment and three times more likely to be robbed. White teachers who teach in predominantly minority secondary schools are seven times more likely to be attacked and need medical attention. (14)

Furthermore, teachers and students in the larger cities tend to be attacked or victimized more often and more violently than those in smaller cities and rural schools (15). The "dangerous cities" cited for school violence normally have a population base in excess of one half million.

> Violent school crimes arouse destructive fears among students, parents and teachers. Hence the consequences of violent crimes for the

schools are more serious than their numbers might suggest. Four percent of all secondary school students in public schools said that they stayed home from school out of fear at least once in the month before the survey; but in the largest cities, seven percent said this, as did eight percent of the junior high students. Teachers, although they were less likely to be victims of violence than students, also responded in terms of their fears. Twelve percent of the secondary school teachers nationwide said that they had hesitated to confront misbehaving students in the month preceding the survey, out of fear for their own safety; 28 percent of the teachers in the larger cities said this. Furthermore, the fear responses of both students and teachers would have been greater if the study had asked about behavior over the entire year. No doubt student and teacher transfers from the more violent schools reflect these fears. (16)

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

If these trends continue to escalate, it is imperative that the educational system react in an appropriate manner. The *Topical Bibliography: Violence and Vandalism in Schools* reveals that there are 189 documents available from the 1970s to 1987 dealing with criminality in schools (17). Several more studies, monographs, and articles have been published during the last two years. Most of these materials deal with the sociometrics of establishing a safe school environment.

Concerned parents, teachers, administrators, and mature students should review the materials carefully. If a well-managed and structured school security program is effectively supported, there should be a reasonable expectation that crime problems will decrease.

School boards have often employed contractual security personnel to combat the problem. In some case, CETA or Job Corps monies have been used to train and employ many unemployed persons as security officers. In others, school administrators have developed in-house security divisions rather than using local law enforcement personnel. School and professional security officials have known for some time that security problems are significantly reduced when fair and impartial disciplinary programs are in place. A well-disciplined school with a low truancy rate and a zealous quest for the learning experience is certainly the best way to deal with the social and educational aspects of the issue.

These measures are important, but the first step in crime prevention management in a school is to admit that the problem exists and to report crimes when they occur. This means a true and accurate reporting of all serious offenses. While status offenses and matters of nonserious social consequence may be dealt with by the school administration, serious crime problems require competent police and justice system intervention.

It is essential to remedy the situation described in the *Memorandum for the Cabinet Council on Human Resources* (CCHR) *Concerning Disorder in Our Public Schools*:

> Over 75 percent of all principals reported that crime was little or no problem in their schools—during the same period in which three million students and teachers were victimized every month in our nation's secondary schools. According to the principals, only 157,000 illegal acts occurred each month and two-thirds of these were never reported to the police (NIE, *Safe Schools Study*, 1978).
>
> The point bears repeating: According to the National Institute of Education study, over 3,000,000 crimes occurred each month in our nation's secondary schools and school officials reported only 51,000 of them to the police: a ratio of 58 unreported crimes for each one reported. And, again, the current situation may at best be unchanged. According to the 1983 Boston survey, the lack of confidence that wrongdoers will be punished is so pervasive that only 65 percent of students and an astonishing 28 percent of teachers victimized by school violence reported the incidents to officials. (18)

Accurate reporting, then, is essential for the safety of all school personnel. An effective way to ensure this is a written school policy on how to handle and report school violence. (See p. 11, "Crime Reporting," for further information.)

PURPOSE AND LIMITATIONS OF THIS MONOGRAPH

Very few textbooks, monographs, and school crime prevention materials provide school staff with direction on personal crisis management and employee safety when confronted with school crime and violence. This monograph addresses these issues. It answers such questions as, how to deal successfully with violent crimes in the school; how to survive attempts at robbery, rape, and armed assault; how to protect students and school staff when a mentally ill person or a terrorist takes an entire class hostage.

The monograph is about surviving criminal events and humanly caused crises. It is about staying alive and well in a dangerous school environment. It is about being a successful victim and protecting students by influencing a criminal through a mindset and understanding. It is about helping school staff use their interpersonal skills, their knowledge of human behavior, and a fundamental understanding of criminal activity to their advantage in lowering the probability of their own criminal victimization.

This monograph is not an introduction to the use of firearms, a tear gas paralyzer, or any weapon system. It does not discuss karate, judo, or

kung fu. It avoids advocating siege mentalities, although it does describe target-hardening methods and it does suggest good locks and key systems, as well as methods of electronic deterrence.

Many other areas of interest also are not addressed. School vandalism, for example, has been studied in over 60 publications, referenced in the *Topical Bibliography: Violence and Vandalism in Schools* (19). Many contributions to that volume address larceny and burglary in the school environment, as well.

Most safety and security materials are written by educators. This monograph is written by a criminologist from a criminological perspective. Whenever possible, school crime data and school crime studies were used. The underreporting of serious crimes in the schools, however, has caused difficulties. In many instances, therefore, standard street crime data were used because of the insufficiency of school crime data.

Finally, as the monograph emphasizes, crime prevention, school security, and school safety are everyone's responsibility. Thus the approaches used will help school staff—

1. Become informed about crime problems in the school.
2. Use the social sciences and knowledge about delinquency to construct crime avoidance and crime deterrence methods.
3. Learn to live safely during a violent era in the public school system.

2. SECURITY

Good security is a positive approach to a negative problem. It is a state or sense of safety, a freedom from anxiety and fear about crime. It is a knowledge of protection, a method of crime avoidance, and a defense against attack. It is a state of mind, but it can also be a reality. It can be used to protect individuals as well as institutions from risk.

This chapter discusses several methods of security for schools and school staff. These methods range from measures that school planners and administrators can take to practical suggestions that individual staff members can take for their personal protection.

SCHOOL SECURITY

Security should impact virtually every school activity. It should be a factor in the planning and construction or remodeling of all schools. It should influence most daily operations and program scheduling, and should contribute to disciplinary programs. It should be a consideration in the placement of exterior lighting, the location of trees and shrubbery, and the access to natural or artificial cul-de-sacs on school grounds. In fact, all areas of the school facility, including the grounds, should be carefully scrutinized by professional security consultants who understand environmental influences on crime.

While security impacts (and may inconvenience) many aspects of the school day, it is possible to plan viable security programs that are compatible with the daily operations of the school. However, a price must be paid for a successful program. In some schools, this may be greater than in others. Some schools may necessarily place security first until an insecure or dangerous environment is made safe.

Physical security can be provided for any school. Discipline, security, and control issues are directly correlated with the size of the school and of the student population. Consequently, it is easier to provide security for smaller facilities with reasonably sized student populations. In other words, principals can more easily manage a population of 400 to 500 students than they can monitor the behavior of 1,500 to 2,000. In addition, intruders are less attracted to smaller facilities. Larger schools provide increased opportunities for anonymity and for criminal acts. Intruders may believe that larger schools have so many concurrent activities that they will not be noticed or identified as possible law violators.

CRIME REPORTING

The first step in battling crime at school is to recognize that criminal activity occurs there. This is the reason it is so important to ensure that all serious offenses, both juvenile and adult, are reported to law enforcement authorities and that information about school crime is disseminated to the entire school staff.

The reporting of crime to the public is necessary because so many citizens believe that crimes happen to someone else. School staff cannot afford to be blinded by the "it-won't-happen-to-me" syndrome. Crimes can occur in any school environment; they do not necessarily occur only in crime-ridden areas. But these crimes do not have to happen to the person who is mentally prepared, observant, and knowledgeable.

For all these reasons, each school should have a written policy for handling and reporting school violence. The policy should be based on the needs and circumstances of the individual school, and its details should be made known to all school employees, students, and parents.

RISK REDUCTION

An important element of crime prevention is risk reduction or avoidance. Risks can be ignored, removed, reduced, or transferred (1). Many teachers simply ignore the risks, saying, "It won't happen to me. Crimes like rape, robbery, and murder happen to other people—not to me." In a school setting, a known risk (a troublemaking student) can be removed by expulsion or by failure. In states with compulsory attendance laws, a particular risk (such as a violent student or a gang member) may be transferred or an entire gang may be dispersed to many different schools. It may not be possible to remove a gang, but gang influence in the school setting can be minimized administratively.

Risks may also be reduced by establishing a new group security consciousness. American businesses curtailed significant losses when security became everyone's concern. So may teachers, administrators, staff, and students become convinced that school security and safety is their concern. A secure educational environment will enable teachers and students to concentrate on learning activities.

PERSONAL SECURITY/TARGET HARDENING

School security is a cooperative function requiring a full commitment on the part of everyone in the school. But personal security and crime prevention cannot be delegated to others, including security service employees and police officers. Practically speaking, these officers cannot be

everywhere at once. Each school staff member, therefore, must be responsible for his/her personal security.

In its simplest form, target hardening is a security concept that significantly decreases, deters, or prevents crime against specific individuals or particular institutions. A soft target is an easy target; a hard target is a difficult one. Those who become target hardened are much less likely to become victims of crime. They are simply overlooked as potential victims.

Personal security precautions ensure against the possibility of "walking into trouble without ever seeing it." Good security need not be expensive or time-consuming. When it is in place, the negatives of crime and violence are avoided. The security program itself may provide protection against stress. Consequently, teachers can live and work much more comfortably and effectively.

As a properly functioning fire alarm can keep a fire from destroying a building, so can a personal security program protect an individual from physical harm.

> A personal security program is the simple act of protecting yourself from physical harm. It is the accumulation of all the actions you have taken during your life to reduce or eliminate the chances of your being assaulted, attacked, beaten, molested, raped or murdered. In fact, you practice personal security to varying degrees every day of your life. (2)

School staff in dangerous schools can avoid the negatives of crime by adopting simple crime avoidance behaviors into their lifestyle. These are target-hardening methods. Such security is like looking both ways before crossing a one-way street. Accepting the real possibility of a driver going the wrong way may save your life. In other words,

> Develop a healthy alertness, but not an unhealthy paranoia, about what is going on. If you were taking a stroll in the jungle, you would avoid stepping in quicksand and if you could, you should avoid equally unpleasant experiences in a city. Yet I marvel at the number of people, who, after waiting for the pedestrian light to change in their favor, step off the curb without first looking to see if traffic is approaching. They walk right into trouble without ever seeing it in advance. (3)

You are present wherever you are. You can observe, interpret, detect, and avoid problems for yourself and students for whom you have responsibility. For example, teachers who are least likely to be victims of crime observe all their surroundings. They look at each student they pass in hallways and attempt to gain at least a moment of eye contact. The subliminal message being exchanged is that "I know who is here and I know

who you are. I can remember your features. I can identify you." The influence of careful observation is a strong criminal deterrent for everyone that you observe.

Shy or retiring teachers who keep their eyes at ankle level could not tell whom they passed or identify the features of students or visitors they passed. Observant teachers, on the other hand, can decrease the probability that any of the people they encounter will commit a delinquent act against another that day.

Observant school staff also walk with an erect bearing, emanating an aura of confidence. They walk down the center of lonely school corridors and on the street edges of sidewalks. Muggers and rapists cannot easily attack them. The space and time necessary for an attacker to walk across the area is of tactical advantage to the potential victim, allowing time and opportunity to take defensive action, to run or to scream.

While female teachers or staff members would not want male students to think they are interested in them inappropriately, they should make every attempt to be well liked by students. Popularity, too, can be a crime prevention tactic. Assailants are unlikely to attack a person whose teaching or help they appreciate. But if they dislike a person, their satisfaction in victimizing the person may be increased.

Female teachers are sometimes victimized by whistles from boys or men who are acting obnoxiously. The prudent teacher responds that this is not an acceptable behavior. She need not accuse or ask, "Why did you whistle at me?" She is polite, but communicates her displeasure. For example, she might say that many women find "wolf whistles" offensive. By handling the situation assertively, but not aggressively, in a safe environment, she is decreasing her future chances of victimization in any type of crime.

Target hardening sends criminals or delinquents away from you. They want a maximum return on a minimized risk and will go elsewhere to find an easier target when you harden up. In other words, if you create an environment that increases the amount of time necessary to steal from you, or rob, rape, assault, or abuse you, the criminal will look for a softer, easier victim. The person best equipped to protect you against crime, then, is yourself (4).

UNIFORMED OFFICERS

Alert administrators patrolling hallways and stairwells, and carefully supervising classrooms, cafeterias, recreational areas, and locker rooms may create an impression that those who commit violations are likely to get caught. Uniformed officers may do this as well.

Uniformed security officers or police officers allowed to patrol through

a dangerous school setting are strong deterrents to crime. Their presence is a reality as well as a symbol of other officers supporting the school system. In some cases, PTAs have organized parental patrols to help maintain school order. This is a good idea in many circumstances, but not when guns and knives and blackjacks are a danger. People who are not trained to encounter violence may worsen rather than improve the situation.

Sometimes problems arise between principals and police officials, and they cease to cooperate. For example, the principal calls the police because a situation has gotten out of control. Then, when the police officers control or contain the problem, the principal wants to reassert control, perhaps insisting that the officers should not make an arrest. The officers may be concerned that a parental civil rights suit will follow if an arrest is not made. This is always a possibility when some degree of physical force has been necessary. Police officers face potential litigation even if the force was used only in a search for weapons or narcotics.

Often principals may not understand the current degree of police professionalism. In fact, the educational and training level of police officers is higher in the United States than in any other country in the world. Thousands of police officers enter law enforcement each year with a baccalaureate or a master's degree. In addition, most states have statutorily mandated training programs by a state or local police academy. These academies are normally licensed by the state and offer excellent training.

Cooperation between school authorities and police officials is essential—both to prevent crime whenever possible and to ensure the safety of all concerned when violence of any kind erupts.

Many police officials believe that serious school crimes are underreported. To be effective, crime prevention programs must be based on the knowledge of (1) how many crimes are actually occurring, (2) what types of crime are occurring, (3) when or at what times they are occurring, (4) where they are occurring or occurring most frequently, and (5) who the perpetrators are. When do intruders gain entrance to school facilities? How do they gain access to the location of the crime? From which areas do they leave the scene?

DESIGNING A SCHOOL CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAM

The cooperation of everyone involved—administrators, teachers, staff, students, parents, and protection personnel—is needed to work toward the common goal of school security. Every available resource should be well utilized to ensure reasonable order. Training may be required to increase the appropriate use of time, equipment, and staff resources.

Effective school safety programs are developed to meet the needs of the faculty and students. They include a written school policy for handling and reporting acts of violence, as mentioned earlier.

If school attacks usually occur after school hours, then it is important to ensure that all students and faculty safely vacate the premises each day. Perhaps a safe and supervised area for faculty and students staying after school can be made available. In some cases, teachers may be required to exit the school grounds. While this may be an inconvenience, it is better than living with the consequences of robbery, assault, rape, and murder.

In environments where crimes occur during school hours, a police or security presence is the first step to ensure basic protection. Schools may also begin restricting access and egress points. Fire exit doors can be placed on a central alarm so that the alarm goes off each time an unauthorized entrance or exit occurs. While the alarm can be used as a harassing tactic by delinquents, a serious intruder would not want to risk being identified by it.

In addition, closed circuit television units can electronically monitor all hallways, exits, stairways, and other points of danger. If the units are observed during working hours and prompt responses are made to fights, assaults, or strong-armed robberies, these electronic aids become an increasingly appropriate deterrent.

An access protection system can increase assurance that only authorized personnel are present in a school. It prevents intruders from coming into a building at all or seriously inconveniences their access. This is an excellent target-hardening technique. Space, access, and time become useful deterrents against intruders. Then all the school must do is to control delinquency within its own borders.

VIGILANCE

In dangerous schools, school staff must never let down their guard. They must never let anyone get close enough to them to compromise their activities. They should not walk alone or unescorted through dangerous or unsupervised areas. Robberies, assaults, and rapes increase when security carelessness or inattention is obvious.

Crime rates increase when victims do not participate in active and ongoing crime prevention programs. One criminologist who studied terrorist kidnapping of Americans in Latin America from 1970 through 1985 found that there were 781 reported kidnappings. Although the victims knew that Americans were being targeted, in the vast majority of cases they failed to exercise even elementary security practices (5). If security practices had been utilized, it is predicted that "the number of

abductions would probably have been cut by 50 to 70 percent" (6). The same principles recommended by internationally recognized security consultants can be applied to schools.

Target hardening or crime prevention can reduce your chances of being a crime victim by 70 percent or more (7). Most crime prevention methods can be accomplished by (1) knowing about crime in your environment, (2) observing your environment at all times for threats, and (3) taking appropriate countermeasures to ensure your own safety. Such a countermeasure may be as simple as making a phone call: "Please send security to the teachers' parking lot. A group of gang members has congregated there. I am afraid to go to my car under these circumstances. Please have security accompany me." A simple observation of a possible threat coupled with a positive reaction to do something to increase your safety is appropriate. If your school does not have security, call the principal or a police car. There are always options.

If you see an unreasonable threat in the school that is not being dealt with, discuss the situation with administrators. If repeated attacks against students or teachers continue without preventive action, and after you have exhausted internal school regulations, you might inform the leaders of your Parent-Teacher Association that personal safety is a real concern in your school. You have the right to reasonable security. But remember that you can never totally delegate the responsibility for your safety to any other person.

3. ROBBERY SURVIVAL

There are myriad forms of violence in most schools, ranging from major to minor. There is a wide discrepancy within possibilities, frequency, intent, and motivation. Each act of violence is serious and demands attention and a formalized school policy for handling unacceptable events within the school setting. This monograph, however, concentrates on only three of the more extreme forms of school violence—those that can be especially life-threatening with a potential for murder—robbery, rape, and hostage taking.

THE FACTS

Approximately 600,000 robberies occur each year in the United States (1). Some 40 percent of the robberies and 36 percent of the assaults against teenagers have occurred in schools (2). The Boston Safe Schools Commission reported that in 1983 one-half of their teachers and nearly 40 percent of their students had been victims of school robbery, assault, or larceny (3).

In 1978, The National Institute of Education reported that each month some 112,000 secondary school students are robbed through force, weapons, or threat. The same report to Congress indicated that some 6,000 secondary teachers are robbed each month (4). In Chicago over 27 percent of all teachers reported being victimized in school robberies (5). This study indicated some 6,750 reported robberies against teachers and 6,250 against students during the same time period. Teachers are more likely to be robbed by intruders than by students, whereas students are more often robbed by other students. Since students are victimized more often than teachers, while at school, there is every indication that a very low crime reporting policy is being followed. For example,

> The risk of violence to teenagers is greater in school than elsewhere. They spend only 25 percent of their waking hours in school, yet 40 percent of teenage robberies occur in schools.... Data from students interviewed reflected that [at least] 525,000 attacks occur each month in public secondary schools—almost 22 times as many as are recorded by the schools [and thus, reported to the police]. (6)

While these particular statistics may be questioned because of the apperceptional influence of young people and student reporting sources, the general consensus is that public school crime is significantly underreported. This problem is pervasive. According to one study, approximately two-thirds of all school robberies go unreported to the police (7).

> It is clear that [many] school administrators will continue to ignore the problem unless the public demands action—and the evidence that the problem *is* being ignored is revealed. (8)

Underreporting is a real problem because parents and even teachers may not know that they should be taking full security precautions. Furthermore, crime prevention programs will not be initiated or developed when their need is not perceived or apparent. PTA's and professional law enforcement officials must insist upon appropriate criminal justice system reporting of all serious crime. Accurate reporting can lead to more realistic security measures, thus preventing needless violence. In addition, it may also avert damage suits against school boards brought by victims of serious crimes, involving hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars.

The National Institute of Justice reported in *Violence in Schools* (9) that junior high schools have higher rates of robberies than do senior high schools, because other students are the perpetrators. According to this same study, junior high schools are twice as dangerous as senior high schools because they contain higher proportions of involuntary students than do senior high schools. Marginal, delinquent, and socially maladjusted students often drop out when it is lawful for them to do so. But compulsory attendance laws keep many students enrolled in junior high schools.

The Council Report to the President indicated that students in predominantly minority schools are twice as likely to be victims of serious crimes as are students in predominantly white schools. Teachers in these schools are five times more likely to be the victims of attacks requiring medical treatment and three times more likely to be robbed than are teachers in other schools (10).

DEFINING THE PROBLEM

Robbery is normally defined as the "unlawful taking of property by force, or the threat of force, from an individual." It is a theft. But unlike a shoplifter, burglar, or sneak thief, the robber forces a personal and dangerous confrontation between the perpetrator and the victim. Robbery is one of the most dangerous crimes because it often escalates a simple theft into a homicide. J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI once described a robbery as "death looking for a place to happen."

Since robbers are willing to use force to subdue their victims or those intending to apprehend them, they are considered to be very dangerous. The criminal justice system considers robbers to be incredibly dangerous because of the number of police officers who are killed each year attempting to arrest them.

While many people believe that banks are usually the facility at which most holdups occur, this belief is a myth. Many robberies take place at schools. Three percent of all the teachers polled by the NEA reported a personal robbery during the 1983-84 school year (11).

A YOUNG PERSON'S CRIME

The perception of many citizens that robbery is normally carried out by older persons is another myth. Young people seem to be the primary offenders. Available statistics indicate that 73 percent of all robbers arrested are under 25 years of age; 53 percent are under the age of 21, and nearly one-third are under the age of 18 (12). As mentioned earlier, younger persons, ranging in age from 12 to 24 years, also had the highest levels of victimization for crimes of violence and theft (13). Robberies are almost twice as likely to be committed in junior high schools as opposed to senior high schools (14). Other studies report that robbery and assault are most likely to take place in inner-city schools versus those in rural or agrarian settings, and that these crimes occur most often in places where supervision is minimal (15).

A lone robber acting without the aid of an accomplice commits the majority of all robberies. One national study indicated that 59 percent of all robberies were accomplished by an individual, 33 percent by two people, and only 9 percent involved three or more perpetrators (16). Many belief systems about crime are totally lacking in accuracy—especially those relating to sexual, racial, and ethnic factors. The belief that wealthier, upper-class people are victimized more often than others is also a myth. Statistics indicate that poor people are most often the victims:

> Males are the victims of violent crime more frequently than females. Young people bear the greatest risk of being assaulted. Males are robbed and assaulted twice as much as women. If you are black your chances of being robbed are nearly two and one half times higher than if you are white. Black men have the highest victimization rate, followed by white men, black women and white women. People with higher educational levels are more vulnerable to crimes of theft. The lower your income, however, the higher your risk of violent crime. In fact, you are twice as likely to be a violent crime victim if you are unemployed than if you are employed. (17)

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE ROBBED

A robbery, or its attempt, is very traumatic. But it is most important for victims to try to keep their emotions under control. In fact, an armed robber is less likely to injure a victim than is the unarmed robber (18). In most cases, it is the victim's responsibility to determine whether he or she will live or die, or go to a hospital.

> In over two-thirds of robberies, both with and without weapons, victims are either not injured or their injuries are slight. In his Philadelphia study, Normandeau found that in 70 percent of all robberies, there were no injuries or only minor injuries.
>
> In 25 percent of these robberies victims were treated [at the emergency room] and released. In only 5 percent of all cases were victims hospitalized.
>
> In the Denver study by Menachim Amir some 6.5 percent of all robbery victims [in a study involving 1,000 cases] were inflicted with physical injuries beyond those of a minor or bruising nature. Only 0.2 percent of all robbery victims were murdered in this study. (19)

The problem of robbery is that it is so often committed by the very young and uninitiated delinquent. Consider the adrenaline level of a young person with a gun in an adversarial role. Add alcohol or narcotics abuse and the robbery suspect becomes even more dangerous.

Many responses to crimes of violence are promoted in the literature and on the screen. Images of Rambo and Dirty Harry reflect the perception that a victim should resist no matter what the cost. In fact, some of the apperceptional literature suggests that a man is a coward if he does not resist a criminal act, although women are forgiven if they are not "brave." But it is incredibly foolish to resist a robber with a deadly weapon. Resistance might be successful, but the victim is risking his/her own life. The slightest hesitation in following the robber's orders could result in death or serious injury.

The statistics on robbery victimology indicate that it is safer to take a passive approach during this dangerous confrontation (20). If victimized by an armed robber, teachers should try to remain as calm as possible. It might help to show composure by remembering the responsibility you have for maintaining equilibrium at this time. By "thinking," and evaluating what is taking place, your fears can be lessened and you can be less susceptible to falling prey to your own worst fears.

Do not take any unacceptable risks. Try to review all applicable knowledge of human behavior before any compulsive reaction. Resistance invites injury. Many victims of robbery have become victims of homicide because they fought their assailant or they attempted to flee (21).

In some instances a robber will inflict minor injuries to emphasize that

he or she is a serious and dangerous person who will not tolerate any violent reaction during the holdup (22). Some seven percent of all armed robbers are now women (23). Female armed robbers are more likely to inflict injury than their male counterparts (24).

The victim of any robbery should carefully consider any remarks, movements, looks, or responses that might provoke a violent reaction from the robber. It is the victim's responsibility to maintain control over inappropriate responses. For example, do not try to socialize or resocialize a strong-willed youthful offender during a robbery. If these offenders had been appropriately bonded to societal standards, they would not be trying to take your money and valuables by force or the threat of force. In school-yard robberies, many poorly socialized deviants have the opportunity to "get even" with personnel representing a system that they quite often despise. In other words, there may be a purpose beyond just the taking of money.

> If victimized in an armed robbery, the victim should remain cool, put up no resistance and comply promptly with all demands. An experienced bandit will never shoot anyone unless he feels forced to do so. A nervous inexperienced amateur may be unpredictable. [Some perpetrators may be intoxicated or high on drugs.] Obviously, this will compromise the ability of the victim to reasonably predict the behavior of the robber. Therefore, the victim should comply without delay and in such a manner that the response may not be interpreted as resistance. (25)

McDonald's classic robbery study in Denver, Colorado, revealed that one out of every four victims who used guns to defend themselves and one in two who fought without weapons were injured. This means injury levels of 50 percent for those who resisted—one out of every two resisting victims was injured. Furthermore, one in seven of the victims who offered other forms of resistance—such as running away, arguing, failing to follow instructions promptly, or following the robber after the completion of the robbery—was injured. Of the submissive victims in McDonald's study, however, only one in 20 was injured (26).

PREVENTING ROBBERY

Robbery is a crime that often can be prevented. A primary prevention method for this crime and most others is not to appear as a worthy victim. For example, when in high-crime-rate areas, avoid displaying any form of wealth—such as gold chains, bracelets, or other jewelry. Carry small amounts of cash. Although teachers are rarely wealthy by middle-

class standards, in areas of frequent crime, they may appear to be the wealthy people.

A key step you can take to avoid crime is to train yourself to be aware of the activities around you. Observation is the most important crime avoidance behavior. Do not just look at the scenery. Observe your total surrounding. Most of all, observe people. Get to know who belongs and who "fits" in the area. If you sense something wrong, act on your feelings. Assume that your perception is a valid one. If you fear something, or if someone or some location frightens you, do not ignore these subliminal feelings. You do not need a scientific or logical explanation for dealing with your feelings.

Teachers should also ask themselves certain questions before a criminal encounter. For example, "What is my life worth to me and to my family?" "Is preventing a robbery worth putting my life on the line?" Many people may think so. They must make the best decision based on their belief, although many who elect to fight or run find that they are frozen into an inactivity psychologists call "frozen fright." Even frozen fright, however, may reduce further victimization. The robber does not perceive such victims to be a physical threat and therefore does not harm or intimidate them any further. Some people may be successful in rebuffing a robber, but quite frequently they become victims (27).

Victims do not want to help a robber. But by quickly complying with a robber's demands through nonthreatening and nonreactionary moves, they ensure that the robber need not spend any more time than necessary on the premises. Most robbers attempt to vacate the premises quickly after an attack.

If you should become a robbery victim, the following tips will be helpful to keep in mind:

- Do exactly as the robber commands. Do nothing that you are not instructed to do. For example, do *not* raise your hands unless ordered to do so specifically.
- Do not speak unless you are ordered to do so. Certainly do *not* debate or argue with the robber.
- If a robber orders you to lie down on the floor and remain in one place for a fixed time, do so.
- While many police authorities would disagree, it is generally best not to attempt to follow robbers. They continue to be *very* dangerous, perhaps even more so during an escape than during the time of the crime itself.
- After the robber has left, call the police and your principal.

CAVEAT

This chapter has not discussed the carrying of firearms or other dangerous weapons. The use of a weapon requires a great amount of skill and the will to use it. With the possible exception of a very skilled person, the use of the firearm by most people is generally foolhardy. Even police officers often fail to shoot violators at incredibly close distances during a gunfight. The kind of stress generated by an armed robbery increases the probability that a weapon will not be used accurately. The general consensus among justice professionals is that the robber's gun is already one too many at the scene of the confrontation.

Many tear gas manufacturers make exaggerated assertions about their products, claiming that their spray can "knock out" or "incapacitate for one-half an hour" any violator. These are unrealistic claims. Tear gas, too, is a tool for which a user must be constantly trained and retrained. Even the chemical stability (shelf life) of these products is limited. Some users have discovered to their dismay that the spray has deteriorated within the canister over a period of time.

Consider with great care, then, the use of any offensive or defensive weapon. Always assume that a robber has the capability and willingness to kill you. Any attempted heroics may well result in your death. If you should be beaten, stabbed, or shot, stay down. Do not invite further punishment. Your life and health are worth more than your possessions.

Finally, the time to use avoidance or preventative measures is before an armed confrontation occurs. Stay away from dangerous or unsupervised areas of school properties. Lonely corridors, alleyways, and unsupervised work or recreational areas are excellent locations in which to be perceived as a soft or easy target. Park your car in a safe and highly visible location. Ask another teacher or administrator to walk with you through dangerous areas. Be willing to accept serious inconvenience as you carefully and conscientiously avoid becoming a crime victim.

4. RAPE SURVIVAL

> Rape is always and foremost an aggressive act.... In every act of rape, both aggression and sexuality are involved, but it is clear that sexuality becomes the means of expressing the aggressive needs and feelings that operate in the offender and underlie his assault.
>
> —Nicholas A. Groth, with Jean H. Birnbaum, *Men Who Rape: The Psychology of the Offender* (New York: Plenum Press, 1979).

THE FACTS

Rape is probably the ugliest word in the English language. Other, more unacceptable, terms are applied to this offense, but only "rape" communicates that the world's most personal crime has occurred. The emotional damage accomplished against the victim is almost always more injurious than the physical damage. Rape is also an extremely dangerous crime. It occurs most often where the woman feels safest. Over 40 percent of all rapes occur in the victim's own residence (1). The fact remains, however, that 60 percent of all rapes occur outside the home. School grounds, a school parking lot, and a school building are locations where the is crime is often committed.

In over 63 percent of all cases, the rapist is a total stranger to his victim; he commits the majority of these crimes between the hours of 8 P.M. and 2 A.M. (2). Only 12 percent of all the rape victims queried in the National Institute of Law Enforcement's study, *Forcible Rape: A National Survey*, were able or willing to physically resist. Thirty-two percent resisted verbally and 12 percent tried to run away. Forty-three percent of all victims in this survey offered no resistance whatsoever.

Rapes on school grounds occur when victims are casually available. An offender with a knife or a gun can accomplish the act within the hearing range of others if he has frightened his victim into total submission. All he has to do is keep his victim from screaming. He can kill or incapacitate her to prevent a scream.

SECURITY AGAINST RAPE

Quite often teachers may be lulled into a false sense of security. Knowledge that administrators or security officers are in the building, or that cleanup crews are working near her location, may give the teacher a false impression of safety. These people cannot help, however, unless they are alerted to the fact of the problem or know about an attack. Being alone in a remote location of a school complex is foolhardy in today's world. If you must work after school, form "buddy" teams with other teachers. These teams act like a neighborhood watch program or like children at scout camp learning to swim. Let your friends assist you in maintaining school security as you work with them as well. In some settings it may be advisable to be able to lock your class or office door while you are inside. Telephones and two-way communication systems can summon principal, security or police officers, and other teachers.

Teachers may also be compromised during sporting events, plays, and other extracurricular activities. If you remember that you left something in your classroom or office and go to retrieve it, you make yourself vulnerable until you return to your group. When you leave the crowd, you leave protection. Moreover, the noise of such events reduces the victim's ability to alert others to her personal danger. The noise of a basketball game would muffle the sounds of her screams, even if the victim is one of the fortunate 32 percent who is able to verbally resist.

Since rape is an act of violence—not only a sexual offense—teachers should not misunderstand it. Whether you are as thin as a rail or weigh 300 pounds, you still may be attractive to a rapist. A flat-chested, prepubertal girl with a bad case of acne and halitosis, as well as an 80-year-old grandmother, is equally at risk. The literature is complete with case histories on offenders who rape the very young and even infants.

Homosexual rape, too, is on the increase. This topic is not addressed in this monograph except to say that it does exist and that the emotional aftereffect is just as strong for its victim as for the victim of a heterosexual rape. The same indicators for heterosexual rape are obviously appropriate for a homosexual rape.

In fact, the rate for male victims of rape is statistically unreliable since so few cases have been reported (3). These statistics have been gleaned from individual states. In many states a sexual assault against an adult male is not even against the law. FBI statistics define rape as a crime against a female; consequently, there are no statistics on homosexual rape (or of the forced sexual intimacy by women against men). Heterosexual rape often goes unreported to the police because the victim is ashamed or embarrassed (4). Homosexual rape has a much lower reporting rate; authorities can only speculate about its occurrence. Both men

and women victims are often afraid that they will be accused of seducing the rapist, in spite of the fact that seduction was entirely absent from the brutal experience (5).

Because sex is not the primary motive in rape, the force, rage, and violence may be just as important as penetration to the rapist. In fact, a piquer (stabber) may not disrobe at all, getting his satisfaction from stabbing alone. The piquer normally does not kill but makes superficial wounds, climaxing sexually when he sees blood.

BEHAVIORAL DETERRENTS

Don't Appear to Be a Good Victim

The strongest deterrent to rape or to any confrontational crime is to avoid appearing as a "good" victim. Many muggings or robberies may escalate into rape or other violent acts. No one would "invite" a criminal attack of any kind, but certain behavioral patterns may influence the probability of victimization.

As in the event of a robbery, avoid the display of wealth of any kind. An expensive watch, a gold chain, a necklace, or a bracelet is an advertisement that delinquents can steal more from you than from others. They may start with one crime and conclude with quite another.

Another behavior to avoid is one that communicates helplessness—for example, carrying stacks of term papers or tests. To react or respond you must drop the papers first. An attaché case carried in one hand while the other hand grasps car keys gives a lessened impression of vulnerability than the "two-handed stacked-test carry."

Observe Your Surroundings

As mentioned earlier, the best defense against any crime is to be aware of your surroundings. A vigilant and observant attitude reflects an image of a skilled soldier or police officer. By walking the halls and grounds of your school with this perspective, you are less likely to become a victim.

An observer will see that a group of juveniles across the street is suddenly separating. One is walking toward you and the others are approaching at oblique angles. You are just about to get into serious trouble! But since you are observing, you can walk into the doorway of a local business, hail a taxi, or begin moving away from the potential threat. You can even get out in traffic and walk down the middle of the street. It is a better option than getting mugged or raped. If you had not been observant, however, there is a strong possibility that the juveniles

would have you under control before you were even aware of a threat.

People who act distracted also send signals to potential criminals. Reading books or newspapers, sifting through a purse, looking at a map, or listening to a headphone radio or cassette are ways of curtailing the full use of all your senses. Potential victims should also listen to their "sixth sense." If a particular person, place, or situation makes you feel uncomfortable, listen to your unconscious feelings. If the person is a student, perhaps a schedule can be changed to alter the "chemistry of fear" that you feel. If the person is another teacher or an administrator, listen to your feelings. Do not use logic or reasoning to talk yourself out of real fears.

THREE STAGES OF A CRIMINAL ATTACK

Any criminal attack has three stages: (1) an invitation, (2) a confrontation, and (3) an assault (6). An understanding of these three stages can help you avoid a rape, a robbery, or a crime problem completely. Such knowledge may well save your life.

The Invitation

The invitation phase of victimization can be avoided if you are alert. This stage may appear to be innocuous: "May I get directions from you, please?" This would be an acceptable question to respond to when school is in session or when others are around. It may be totally inappropriate if you and the questioner are the only people in a deserted section of the school. To stop and give directions or offer aid increases your risk. The threat toward your safety is great. By saying, "I am sorry, please ask at the office," and never slowing down, you are communicating that you want a safer distance, that you are uncomfortable. Send someone from the school office to help the person in a few moments. Do not risk an attack in an attempt to be friendly or helpful.

The Confrontation

If you have not been observant, you may be compromised already. It is possible for all three stages to occur simultaneously. The norm, however, includes some time separation between the three events. If you have been watching, you have already walked away from the stranger who asked directions. If the questioner was a molester, you have already made him "get out of synchronization." He had plans for you and you did not act or react as he anticipated. He may well abort any planned offense at this time.

If you are confronted by multiple attackers or a criminal with a weapon, it is still possible to run, scream, or get away—but not as likely as before the invitation occurred.

The Attack

During the attack stage, especially if the assailant has a weapon, an all-out resistance is foolhardy and possibly even fatal (7). Some authorities believe in all-out resistance to discourage sexual violations (8). But in most cases this is not safe.

There is a tremendous difference between violent and nonviolent criminal rapists, even though rape is always a criminal act and a personal violation of the victim. The violent sexual offender is not discouraged by resistance. In fact, it increases his pleasure and inflames his appetite for striking, injuring, and mutilating. The victim must decide which type of offender she faces and be correct in her discernment to stop the crime as it spirals or progresses at this stage.

Some women have been successful in stopping a rape by simply asking a perpetrator not to commit the offense. Some victims actually begin a negotiation with the perpetrator; they try to keep the intruder talking as long as possible.

> Despite the fact that his weapon gives him the ultimate control, the longer the conversation continues the more options you gain. In the gunman's eyes, you become less a victim and more a person. Enlightened police departments use negotiation routinely when faced with gunman/hostage situations. When negotiating, speak as calmly as you can, but try not to plead. Pleading only reinforces his power over you. (9)

Statements like "I am a virgin, please do not do this" might deter a minimum violence rapist. He does not want to harm a "nice girl." A sadistic rapist, however, would be encouraged by the same statement. Some women have been known to say, "I am menstruating—this is going to be messy," and have watched the potential rapist walk off. Others have even claimed to be pregnant and to beg for the life of an unborn child. Some have avoided the rape by claiming to be suffering from venereal disease or as an AIDS carrier. There is only one criterion that should be considered during a potential rape: anything that saves your life and minimizes injury is the right thing to do (10).

THE VIOLENT SEXUAL OFFENDER

The violent sexual offender will not care what the victim says. Pleading will increase his level of gratification. He may rape you even if you

faint, or if you pretend to do so, but would prefer to hear you scream and beg. The violent sexual offender will continue to strike, bite, or mutilate even after a woman has told him that she will do anything he said. Since rape is the ultimate violent conquest, and the most humiliating of violent encounters, the perpetrator may force oral sexual entry and anal copulation as well. Across jurisdictions of all sizes, oral sexual acts have occurred in approximately one-fourth of all reported rape offenses (11). A combination of oral acts and anal acts was slightly more common than anal acts alone (12).

Women often use their hands or their feet to attack the weaknesses of the rapist. The eyes, throat, groin, and instep of the foot are all quite vulnerable. Some women have even wrenched the genitals of the rapist as penetration was being attempted or completed. These are dangerous tactics, however, because they may increase the intensity of the violence.

Physical force is used in one-half of all rapes; weapons are also used in one-half of all cases (13). Rape victims generally sustain some type of physical injury—approximately one-fourth of all victims suffer injuries severe enough to require medical attention or hospitalization (14). Victims who resist are more likely to be physically injured than those who do not resist (15.)

The emotional injuries of rape victims are also important. Victims who resisted are better able to cope emotionally with "post-rape trauma syndrome" (16). They risked their lives to avoid or stop the incident. They were beaten up. Others could see signs of their resistance. The victim without any signs of bruises, contusions, or other indications of physical trauma, however, is often made to feel guilty. "After all," others may reason, "if she had really resisted, there would be some kind of visible injury." This is very unfortunate because the victim who survives is a successful victim. The fact that she is alive shows that she did some things right. If she did not, she might well be in the police morgue.

Whatever happens, and even if a rape occurs, the victim should try to avoid panic as much as possible. Concentrate on how you can survive. You may not be in control of the situation, your clothes, or even of your own body, but you can try to control your mind and your emotions. The objective now is to stay alive. If you panic or become hysterical, you are increasing the chances of more serious injury or death. Even screaming should be used as a defensive weapon, not just as an emotional reaction.

ADDITIONAL PREVENTIVE STRATEGIES

Stay alert even when you are with your associates. In the parking lot, look at your car as if it were an armored fortress. Approach it with key in hand. Keep it locked at all times. Relock it as soon as you have entered

it. Do not be distracted by observing your environment when getting your keys out of your purse. If you were opening the trunk of your car when first confronted, you may choose to jump in and close the trunk lid. (When planning your personal security program, examine the inside lock of the trunk to see how you can release yourself if you should ever have to protect yourself by jumping into the trunk.)

When outside, remember always to use space and distance to your advantage. If you believe that you are about to be attacked, walk in the street facing traffic. If you are more afraid of traffic, walk on the street side of the sidewalk. Street assailants depend on surprise. If they have difficulty in surprising you, they may abort their plans entirely. The farther you are from doorways, alleys, trees, shrubbery, and staircases, the less likely you are to be surprised by a street criminal. Your powers of observation will let you walk around a problem instead of into a trap.

> Give yourself permission to be impolite and "overcautious." You're under no obligation to smile at everyone, give strangers change or directions or slow your pace when someone tries to attract your attention. If your intuition registers discomfort, speed up, cross the street, turn around, [run], or do whatever you feel is necessary. Then move in a purposeful, determined manner. You might feel you have misjudged someone now and then, but better a little jumpy than jumped. (17)

The teacher who does not let her guard down in a "safe school" and who always accepts the responsibility for her own safety is not as likely to become a rape victim or to be victimized in any other crime. She uses knowledge about crime to avoid it. She uses her powers of observation, her ability to interpret what she discerns, and her wits to avoid confrontational circumstances. She is a hard target. Criminals and rapists seek easier, safer, and softer targets who are not observant and who do not act to avoid crime.

Stay alert. Stay alive. Be observant and use this ability, this talent, to avoid the terrible physical and emotional trauma of becoming another crime victim. Remember that this is your responsibility. Not all rape can be prevented but most stranger-to-stranger "conquests" can be avoided.

5. HOSTAGE-TAKING SURVIVAL

THE FACTS

Zealots—crusaders—or robbers often seize banks, public buildings, or "symbolically significant institutions" in the United States. During 1988 over 20 school barricade/hostage events took place. These events involved principals, teachers, and children.

Internationally, over one-third of all crusader or terrorist events involve the taking of hostages (1). Individuals who take whole groups hostage are classified as criminals, terrorists, or mentally ill. For whatever obscure reason, some of the offenders attack society's most symbolic and cherished social institution—the schoolroom. They seem to want to draw out some coercive power or influence to themselves through holding innocent children and teachers hostage. Parents, children, teachers, and administrators suffer in these situations.

One fortunate aspect of the normative crusader hostage taking is that the victims are seldom murdered (2). Even when none of the hostage takers' demands are met, executions rarely occur. Ninety-eight percent of all hostage victims are eventually freed (3). Media reports of kidnappers executing their captives are vastly misunderstood and often inflated. As a matter of fact, worldwide statistics show that 79 percent of all hostages who are killed, die during rescue attempts by the police or special military SWAT teams (4). Experience indicates that if hostages do not resist at the point of armed assault, they will be more likely to survive (5). Resistance should never be offered in the face of overwhelming force (6).

The time to avoid a hostage crisis or kidnapping is before it occurs. Observation is a potential victim's strongest weapon in this situation also. Most victims have been placed under extensive surveillance before the actual kidnapping. If you notice someone following you or placing your school under surveillance, report this to authorities. If you are mistaken, there is no problem. If you are correct, you have stopped or deterred a planned hostage taking or some other crime.

Teachers held hostage in an American schoolroom will probably survive. During the ordeal, it is important that they try to remain calm and directly influence a favorable negotiated outcome. Maintaining a healthy emotional equilibrium under this kind of stress, though difficult, can be managed. Understanding some of the tenets of the negotiation process

will help victims project a professional demeanor even under this stressful circumstance. Calmness can also be increased by using the techniques of self-hypnosis or biofeedback.

If taken captive, either as an individual or with a classroom of students, you should expect to be held for up to several days. It is unrealistic to expect a captivity of less than 24 hours.

SURVIVAL TECHNIQUES

The initial attack will be spontaneous and terrifying. The kidnapping itself is quick, perhaps violent and traumatic (7). Firearms may be discharged. Threats to kill may be made. Profanity, physical abuse, and death threats may be used against anyone demonstrating even the slightest hesitation or tendency toward resistance. While people who are in good physical condition or who have been trained in self-defense may prefer to resist, they should be advised that it is very unwise to do so. Even verbal resistance may cause grave risk. Physical resistance may be met with a serious use of force or possible death.

Hostage victims are usually mistreated in the initial stage of confrontation. This is done to condition them, to force their compliance, and to intimidate them into obeying every order. Once the initial onslaught or attack is over, victims can usually expect reasonable treatment if they remain passive. Female victims are rarely raped or sexually abused by their captors.

The first moments during and after an attack are very dangerous because the kidnappers are nervous. They want to achieve control and are very likely to overreact to any kind of resistance (8). As the victim's mind races over the questions of fighting and running away, it is easy to respond inappropriately. Experts agree, however, that it is very dangerous to resist armed and determined adversaries at close range. Resistance should never be made in the face of overwhelming force (9). This rule against overreacting is even more important when many lives are at stake—an entire schoolroom of students, for example. Resistance at this stage could endanger everyone. A sense of group responsibility should continue to exist throughout the ordeal.

Once you are under control, do precisely what you are instructed to do. Do only what you are told to do; do nothing else. Do not volunteer to do anything unless it would help a child or another teacher maintain emotional composure. Many victims are murdered because they resist. It is important to remember that if the abductors wanted to kill you, they would have done so earlier. Their goal may be almost the same as yours at this point. They want something—an escape plan or amnesty guarantees—before they will consider releasing their hostages. You want to be

released as well. Since you want the same thing, at least on this issue, perhaps you should help them to be successful.

Always remember that every minute you live increases your chance of surviving the incident. Do your best to maintain emotional composure. Remember that the statistics indicate that you probably will not be killed or seriously injured. Avoid any quick or precipitous movements. These can cause the kidnapper to think that you are trying to escape, even when you are not. Do not do or say anything that might provoke a violent reaction. Do not move too fast when you are told to move. Do not move too slowly or the kidnapper may think you are passively resisting. Never whisper. Whispering suggests conspiracy (10). Should you need to speak to another victim, do so in a normal tone of voice. Ask your captors for permission to speak to them. Any resistance invites injury. Do not become caught up in an adversarial role with an abductor. Let the bonding process begin in order that the psychological processes will help protect you and your students.

> Speak when spoken to by [your captors]. Do as they say. Neither seek nor refuse favors. Face them when talking to them Do not look away. Do not try to face [or stare] them down. (11)
>
> At all times retain your dignity. Do not knuckle under to them. Assert your dignity quietly and with firmness. (12)

The following pages offer additional guidelines for hostage survival.

Handling Stress and Anxiety

Being taken hostage is one of the most stressful and dangerous events that anyone can ever experience. You do not know if you will live through it. You do not know if, or when, or how you might die. You do not know if you will be mistreated. You do not know how long you will be held captive, for your "sentence" is indefinite and the length of your captivity is governed by others. You are also worried about personal hygiene, dirty clothing, and brushing your teeth.

> At the beginning of the event the stress is tremendous. Many people who were "successful victims" of a hostage event reported different physical responses: Some vomited or felt waves of nausea; some trembled or shook; others fainted or sobbed; many felt cold or perspired heavily; some experienced an involuntary voiding of fluids or waste matter. Those physical reactions are nothing to be ashamed of and all of them are natural, normal responses to an exceedingly traumatic and abnormal event. (13)

The trauma of hostage taking does not end with the adrenaline levels of the first moments. The crisis continues. Suddenly you, too, have to ask someone for permission to get a drink of water or to use the rest-

room. You may even find that your assailant insists that the restroom door remain open to prevent an escape attempt. Your last vestiges of privacy diminish. Your fears of physical and perhaps sexual abuse increase. Probably no other situation is quite like an abduction. Even in a natural disaster or an accident, people have some control over their lives. This is not so during a hostage situation and its repercussions may be acute (14).

Generally, hostages experience the greatest anxiety during the first few hours of captivity. The first few minutes are critical; this is the period when most hostages are injured or killed. Your reaction at this point will determine how your kidnapping will end (15). Another very dangerous time is during a rescue attempt. A rescue assault could create a higher risk than the first attack. But the hostage takers are more alert and on edge during the first moments of their transgression. The emotional climate then is ripe for a violent encounter. If the teacher can maintain composure and exert some level of influence over frightened students, everyone's chances of survival will increase significantly. An unruly, unmanageable child, a hysterical child, will "continually fray away at the nerves of the captor or captors." Discipline of the hostage group will improve everyone's chances of survival.

Time Is in Your Favor

As the hours go by, the hostages and their friends and family may give up emotionally to the stress involved. It must be remembered, however, that an inverse law persists in all hostage incidents (16)—that is, the longer hostages survive, the greater the probability that they will walk away from the incident under their own power. Remember that your decisions during captivity may well be the variable that governs the outcome of events.

Bonding

The hostage's chances increase with time because a psychological bonding is usually taking place between captor and captives:

> The hostage quickly recognizes that his interests and those of his captors coincide. Both would like to see the demands met. The hostage's life depends on it!...Being kidnapped is a life-threatening experience, what the psychologists call a "primary experience" in which the hostage is defenseless and helpless. His abductors control everything—whether he eats, whether he is bound, whether he lives. The dependency is like that of a helpless infant. The kidnapper is the parent, but he is more than that, he is a god, for he obviously controls life and death—and there is no escape. Under such circumstances a process

> of introjection takes place. The hostage may begin to depend on, to identify with, and eventually to develop a certain bond with his captor. (17)

Any relationship must have a two-dimensional impact. It influences the captor as well as the captive. This relationship can become a survival tool. A teacher, while confined with a zealous nationalist or a distraught parent in an unsuccessful child custody suit, may begin to identify with and develop a bond with the captor. As she/he talks to the captor, she/he may begin to understand the captor's apprehensions and to feel that the captor, too, has valid claims.

The hostage taker of a schoolroom or a school bus full of students must also realize that all are in this event together. Their common fate rests on the successful conclusion of the negotiating process. They share a common space for the duration of the incident. Stress adds to the probability that symbiotic relationships will occur.

After the first few hours of captivity, for example, the hostage should begin a realistic and reasonable dialogue with the captor: "May I use the restroom, please, sir?" Always speak respectfully. Never talk down to a captor. "Excuse me, please, sir. May I get a drink of water for some of my children? They are thirsty."

These requests are reasonable. They are also necessary, not only for physical reasons, but because they begin the relationship. Do not ask, "When are you going to release us?" Do not argue or act confrontational. The hostage takers want a reasonably comfortable group. They do not want to stay in the same location with hostages smelling of urine or excrement. Reasonable ground rules can be developed between victims and captors even under the most adverse circumstances.

Time, used wisely and well—including the bonding process—can save your life. Use it as a friend, not an enemy. Make the best of every hour. Form relationships. Conduct yourself with the comportment appropriate to a professional. Get your captors to like you. It is really difficult to execute someone you have come to like and respect (18).

FOUR STAGES OF HOSTAGE SITUATIONS

Four stages of behavior are demonstrated during most group abductions: (1) alarm, (2) crisis, (3) accommodation, and (4) crisis resolution. These are described in the following pages.

The Alarm Stage

In some cases, the hostage taker did not intend to be caught or "contained" or trapped by authorities. There was no plan to take an individual or a group hostage. Thus the captor's stress level will be high.

Other hostage takers who have captured a school or some other teaching facility may have planned or prepared for a barricade/hostage event. In such cases the police, the victims, and the perpetrators are contained at a location and are at an impasse over the release of the hostages. This stage is very critical. The hostage takers must subdue their victims both physically and emotionally. The more fear they can instill, the less probability that they will have to use life-endangering physical force. The most important thing for the hostages to remember is never to argue with a captor—especially with one who is holding a gun.

Hostage takers may be under more stress during this initial stage of the confrontation than their victims. They may be desperate in the struggle to succeed. Their desperation and fear will be radiated toward their victims. Perpetrators and victims become inexorably intertwined in a "partnership of fear." The victims are afraid of the perpetrators, the situation, of themselves and how they will react, and of others and their emotions.

The victim has been suddenly thrust from a routine day into a sudden violent encounter. He or she is facing an unknown future and uncertainty with the potential for extreme violence. Some victims often pinch themselves to see if they are having a nightmare. They emotionally disassociate. "This couldn't be happening to me!" Some may become so afraid that they are incapacitated. They cannot act or react, as if they were in a catatonic seizure for a few moments in time. This "frozen fright," however, may have an initial psychological benefit. The immobility itself may save lives. Resistance may be futile at this stage, when well-prepared adversaries attack. Unless the hostage-taking incident is ill conceived, attempting to escape could even be suicidal (19).

In addition to the disorientation caused by the shock impact of the attack and the deprivation of freedom, many hostages have their watches taken so they cannot judge time. There are also space problems. When many people are confined in a small area, victims may become claustrophobic. They may not move freely; they may well lose touch with reality.

Whether taken hostage with others or as a single victim, feelings of boredom and of isolation may creep in.

> Keep quiet. If you whimper and whine, it may provoke more violence from your captors. Maintain your human dignity at all times and have faith in the people trying to set you free. (20)

In this period, then, there are many problems to be concerned about. Persons who become angry, small children who are irritable, and adults who cannot cope with the situation will add significant stressors. The alarm stage is the most traumatic because it invariably involves a dramatic encounter with death (21).

The Crisis Stage

While the crisis stage may be the beginning of reason, the hostage taker is still quite dangerous and unpredictable (22). It is during this period that the captor usually makes the initial demands for money, publicity, power, or a flight to a location outside the United States. Hostage takers who have planned the encounter carefully may now involve certain captives—for example, by insisting that they cover the windows in a schoolroom or office with paper to prevent police sharpshooters from shooting them. Or the captors may have furniture rearranged, with an eye toward security for themselves.

> Once in captivity, your greatest enemy will not be your [captors]. It will be your attitude. Try to control your fear and despair. These two destructive emotions will quickly reduce your ability to...maintain your emotional stability. (23)

Because the adrenaline level of the hostage takers usually remains high, their ability to reason is reduced. Any resistance will therefore be met with force—probably excessive force. This is a real problem because some hostages may begin to cause problems or even to panic as they realize that the police are not going to resolve the issue quickly. Most hostages erroneously believe that the threat to their physical safety increases as time in captivity continues. They do not realize that their chances for living are actually increasing.

The Accommodation Stage

According to FBI Agent Thomas Strenz, accommodation is the longest stage in the negotiation process (24). He suggests that it is also the most tranquil stage. During this period hostage takers may become more reasonable. They are more likely to make concessions, especially if skilled police negotiators are working at the scene.

The recommended behavior for hostages during this stage is not to do anything precipitous. Do not argue or debate with the hostage takers. Do not draw special attention to yourself. Do not act differently from other hostages. In fact, most victims have given up considering escape options at this point (25).

The Crisis Resolution Stage

The final stage is defined as one of resolution or termination. The hostage taker may be fatigued and ready to come out voluntarily. In radical groups the resolution may be a killing of hostages and even the suicide of the hostage taker. The negotiator, whether in a barricade/hostage

situation or in a simple kidnapping case, should give the adversary options for giving in or conceding with the appearance of dignity. Occasionally the kidnapper may be allowed to speak to former hostages or to be escorted in a considerate manner from the barricade scene.

The hostages are probably exhausted. They have been experiencing alternating sensations of boredom and moments of sheer terror. Many of them have become affected by bonding with their captors. They may have hostile feelings toward police officials who did not rescue them or obtain their release sooner. "If they really cared, I would have been released sooner" is the reflected attitude. They may be quite bitter even when authorities did everything possible to expedite the process.

Hostages who have been prepared or trained for the ordeal will exit the event personally stronger. These survivors have reported that all preparations prior to the event were of great help to them throughout the crisis. Because they knew what was happening, and knew what to do and what not to do, they were also able to resume a relatively normal life quickly.

Psychological counseling is recommended for all victims of hostage taking and their families. Post-incident trauma, now well known in psychological circles, should be dealt with immediately before it becomes a more difficult issue. If the crisis occurred in a school setting or during a school-sponsored event, the school system should pay for the cost of this counseling.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COOPERATION

Hostages who want to survive should cooperate with their kidnappers during each stage of captivity. This does not mean that they should violate moral principles or personal standards; it means that they should not become hostile, argumentative, or competitive (26). Calm, moderately passive demeanors are necessary for survival (27).

The U.S. Task Force on Disorders and Terrorism recommends that victims attempt to establish dialogue with their captors. This is done in order to develop lines of communication, to form relationships, bonds, and behavior transference. These bonds should be solicited and responded to. The bonding in and of itself reduces the possibility of violence. Bonding and the mechanisms it entails are antithetical to emotional reactions, fighting-back responses, or what psychologists call "counterphobic [macho] behavior." Counterphobic behavior increases the chances that a victim will be killed (28).

Even though kidnappers may have no qualms about killing a faceless, nameless person, it is quite another matter to execute a victim they have

come to know as a person. Many of the men and women who take hostages have taken lives before. It is difficult to execute a helpless individual, however. Even kidnappers may have scruples against murder (29).

If there are several hostage takers, group decisions may be made. Therefore, a decision on whether executions will be allowed may be heavily influenced by the most violent group member. Try to get as many captors as possible on your side. You can continue to influence those closest to you; try to accomplish this as soon as it is feasible. Time is a variable that should be used wisely.

Police authorities will begin negotiating and will do everything possible to resolve the crisis without the use of violence. But the hostage should do everything possible to nurture a developing bond and to establish a cooperative relationship. These activities can save your life and that of others.

RESCUE ATTEMPTS

Rescue attempts are rarely made in the United States. A special police weapons team (SWAT unit) will not normally be sent in unless lives are being taken. The reason for this hesitation is the inherent danger of the rescue itself and the fact that some 79 percent of all hostages who die are killed during the rescue attempt (30). A knowledge of some universal police policies can, however, help hostages should a rescue be attempted.

The most general rule is to stay still. Keep your body completely motionless. Do nothing that would make the hostage takers or the rescuers feel that you are a threat to them. Do not do anything you are not forced to do by the kidnappers or instructed to do by the police. If a large group of people have been taken captive, the police will try to ensure that a hostage taker does not pretend to be one of the victims. If the hostage situation consists of one teacher and 30 young students, the problem of identifying captors and victims will be lessened, but do not assume anything. Do only what you are told to do. Many SWAT teams are taught to shoot at any potential adversary. "If it moves, shoot it!" This is a necessary policy. While every effort is made to ensure victim safety, this is difficult to accomplish in a crowd. If, at the time of the assault, you are not moving you are not considered a threat. If you run screaming, or become hysterical, you increase your chances of being shot.

Should a gunfight break out, get on the ground or on the floor. If your students are with you, tell them to do the same. Tell them to be quiet, not to scream, and to remain in place until instructed otherwise. Many victims have been killed as they ran to welcome their rescuers. Think avoidance. Think like a rescuer. Lower your risk even from your rescuers at such a perilous time.

FINAL WORD

There is no reason to believe that group hostage taking will decline. In fact, the problem continues to grow. Criminals and the mentally ill may take hostages spontaneously in an effort to ensure their own safety from authorities. Crusaders or terrorists, however, may plan their actions for weeks or even months in advance, placing a facility to be seized under constant scrutiny. In such cases, crime prevention programs can be invaluable.

Whether the surveillants are child molesters, thieves, drug pushers, or terrorists, they will be spotted through any viable crime prevention program. Authorities will be called. Surveillants will be identified and questioned. In all likelihood, they will never come near the school again, without a valid reason.

Hostage victims should know how to act. They should know what to do. Perhaps more importantly, they should know what not to do. Time should be looked upon as a friend and not an adversary, a benefit, not a debit. Lives can be saved by waiting.

Professionally trained police hostage negotiators have a very high proficiency and success rate. Very few hostages have died once these professionals have arrived, even in cases where lives were taken before the negotiators' appearance on the scene.

These men and women know the nuances and psychology of the most stressful negotiations that humans can comprehend. Trust these negotiations—the process itself and the negotiators as professionals. Give them time, in order that they may do their job. Give the hostage takers and the victims time for bonding. Do not insist upon rescue attempts. Remember always that almost 80 percent of all victims who die, will perish in rescue operations or rescue attempts.

Plan your response activities, in order that you will react appropriately. Plan requests that may be able to influence your captors. Keep constant control over your emotions, your tone of voice, and word choice. Help yourself by remaining calm and by showing courage and dignity, even under the most dangerous of all circumstances.

Remember to remain passive, even when rescuers arrive. You should attempt to escape only if your hostage taker falls into a sleep of exhaustion. Stay alert. Stay aware. Survive this ordeal through using your mind, your knowledge of psychology, and your knowledge of hostage events as a weapon against your adversary.

6. CRIME CAN BE DETERRED AND PREVENTED

Effective crime prevention programs can evolve from the "KISS" principle (Keep It Simple, Stupid). Perhaps the best example of the simplicity of crime deterrence is the behavior of a police officer on the beat in a large city. If juvenile delinquents or gangs are harassing a particular street vendor, the officer need only stand at an intersection or across the street to observe the vendor's location. The youths will not commit any theft or vandalism while the officer is observing. The risks are simply too high.

By the same token, shopkeepers can curtail shoplifting by being friendly and helpful to potential customers. They also can deter crime by being observant and by being omnipresent. Young people who shoplift will find another location where they can steal with impunity. They do not want to be caught or identified. They would prefer to steal from someone who is not friendly or helpful.

In middle-class neighborhoods, the person with status may be a prominent businessperson, an attorney, a member of the clergy, a physician. In deteriorating neighborhoods where poverty is widespread, many teenagers are impressed by those who have the most expensive cars, the best clothes, and the most cash. The drug pusher and the pimp probably drive the nicer cars and display elaborate trappings of their criminal activities. In such settings, the tough street people have the status, money, and assets coveted by the poor child. Crime, rather than sports or obtaining an education, may be perceived as the most appropriate means of pulling oneself from the quagmire of poverty. Crime may be the chosen or preferred option for escaping from the ghetto and barrio.

It is in the midst of such environments that all community institutions must operate. More than ever, each student needs the opportunity to prepare for a productive lifestyle. Unfortunately, criminality may be learned and experienced at school. Criminal careers are born, nurtured, and even mature in the school yard. Too many students carry pocket knives or other weapons just to exercise the right to keep their lunch or bus money. "Graduate training" in criminality is continued at juvenile correction and detention facilities as well as in prisons. As never before, complex, multivaried social issues confront education and educators.

Not only must schools prepare students in literacy and academic understandings, they must also prepare them to earn an honest and honorable living. And they must discharge other social obligations to help delinquent or predelinquent students in cooperation with the home, the church or temple, and the informal neighborhood.

Education must not fail these young people. The buck often stops at school, if for no other reason than the mandatory requirement that all students, willing or not, attend school until they reach an age established by law. Not only must the opportunity for an education be provided, it must be provided in a relatively orderly environment. Order can be difficult to maintain in many circumstances, but crime prevention programs must also be implemented.

Crime prevention means to stop a crime from ever occurring. It implies a change of heart, that a violator is no longer interested in committing a particular crime. Crime deterrence simply stops an incident from occurring at a particular location, to a particular person, at a particular time. History has revealed many successful anticrime programs. Although the specific measures used may not be appropriate today, they point the way to some very valid principles. For example, ancient rules of conduct developed an active level of citizen involvement in crime prevention and control. England's ancient concept of "hue and cry" required all persons witnessing a criminal encounter to take up a cry (scream or holler out) and join together to stop the crime and capture the criminal. Pitchforks, hoes, mattocks, picks, and hammers were standard tools used to subdue the criminal.

"Posseos commitatus" was the origin of the posse of the American west. All eligible men were required to help the shire reeve (sheriff) when he ordered a manhunt. In the United States today, many people believe it is a police responsibility to suppress crime and control criminals. This belief is unrealistic. It has always been a myth even though it may not have seemed so. With more than 450,000 public police officers and over 630,000 private security officers, the country still needs everyday citizen involvement to maintain safety in dangerous environments.

Safe and secure schools require a commitment to security from everyone. Of course, teachers are not police officers. But the police have insufficient resources, too. If you want security, you will have to help obtain it yourself. You will need some physical equipment to help do the job efficiently. Even then, however, systems may malfunction or break down. Human systems as well can be imprecise or inept. But any device that will impede the progress of an intruder into the school will substantially decrease the possibility of criminal action there. For example, in some high-crime neighborhoods, schools photograph nonstudents and latecomers as they enter the school complex. Video recording cameras

monitored from hidden locations can photograph anyone anywhere in the building. VCRs can also automatically print the date, hour, minute, and second on taped recordings for possible evidenciary use.

THE REAL CRIME

Perhaps the greatest crime committed against schools—as a result of the violence—is the loss of faith in the honesty and integrity of so many people and in the American way of life. Saul Astor, a leading crime prevention expert, once wrote about thieves. Substituting the word "schools" for the original word "business" in the following quotation fits the broader topic now under scrutiny:

> Let's keep criminals out of our [schools] and out of our lives. Criminals destroy our faith in each other. They threaten our livelihoods. Let's not be deceived by them. Let's learn to recognize them and drive them from our midst. (1)

While no one wants to exclude an incorrigible delinquent from the opportunity to obtain an education, it is important not to neglect the interests of younger students and teenagers who are eager and willing to learn. Committed students have a right to learn in a safe environment. It is a tragic indictment of our system that students and teachers, too, sometimes stay home from school because they are afraid or are seriously concerned about personal security.

SUMMARY

As this monograph has pointed out, many measures can be taken—both administratively and individually—to make schools safer for learning and to prevent, deter, or reduce school violence. The following is a summary of these measures:

- Each school should have a written policy for handling and reporting crimes of all kinds. All school staff should be aware of their responsibilities and options.
- Principals and teachers should receive instruction in how to prevent crimes in school through ongoing programs involving faculty, staff, students, and parents.
- School staff should receive in-service training on the concept and philosophy of crime prevention and deterrence, including personal crime avoidance methods. All teachers in dangerous settings should also be instructed in target-hardening methods, not only for their own safety, but for the youths who need to be stopped and confronted with their criminality.

- In dangerous schools, teachers should be given safe working locations in the building. Teachers and students should not be allowed to remain at school after regular hours in a hazardous environment.
- Security and safety announcements should be made each day over school intercom facilities. Security programs can also be addressed and updated by positive announcements at assemblies.
- All school staff members must understand that personal security is their responsibility; it cannot be delegated to others.
- All school staff members should plan their reaction to an attempted robbery, rape, or hostage taking. Decide what you will do. If you plan to resist, remember that one of every two victims who resists will be medically treated, while only one in 20 nonresisting victims will require treatment.

In addition, remember to develop a lifestyle in which you always observe your surroundings. Get to know local dangers. Talk to police and school security people to ensure an adequate knowledge of community and school crime trends. But do not become so conditioned to these reports that you accept crime as a way of life at your school.

You can make a difference if you commit yourself to a simple but constant crime avoidance lifestyle. Obey the rules of crime prevention and crime deterrence. Accept responsibility for your own security. A good personal security program, coupled with a school system security program, will provide prophylaxis against stress and fear. Good security does not have to be expensive or time-consuming. Crime avoidance is literally a lifestyle commitment; it can become a daily habit.

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NEA Policy on School Violence

Resolution B–14. Nonviolence in Schools

The National Education Association believes that school employees and students should be safe from violence. The Association urges the appropriate agencies—including public safety agencies, school administrators, and local, state, or national governments—to use their authority to prevent violence in schools and in society. (86, 89)

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